

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

In the final rejection of July 14, 2006, Claims 16-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by Crane. In response thereto, Applicants wish to note that Claim 16 has now been amended to indicate that the at least one guide bearing 10 connected to the gear box includes a bearing casing 16 to which the upper part 26 of the gear box is connected, the bearing casing 16 having a greater thickness than the upper part 26. This is discussed in the specification at page 3, line 33 through page 4, line 18 and it is illustrated, for example, in Figure 3 of the present application. As explained in the application, since the casing 16 is of greater thickness than the upper part 26 of the gear box, the interface between the assembly elements and the gear box is advantageously increased so that there is a better distribution of the strains and greater rigidity in the connection between the casing and the gear box, unlike conventional devices. In this regard, insofar as Crane does not teach the upper piece 34 being of greater thickness than the casing of bearing housing 43, the above-noted limitation of Claim 16 is clearly not met. It is further noted that the summary regarding the separate location of the guard members 37, 37a, as explained in the Request for Reconsideration filed October 16, 2006, should be taken into account. In this regard, the labeled "increased thickness of the front piece" illustrated on page 5 of the office action mentioned by the Examiner is actually the side surface of guard member 37a positioned behind and spaced a distance from guard member 37.

In the event that the language added to claim 1 is not believed by the Examiner to patentably define over Crane, the Examiner is invited and is encouraged to call Applicant's Attorney to suggest a rewording of such claim to help place it in condition for allowance.

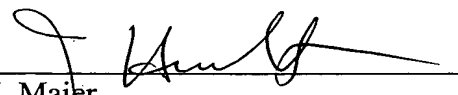
In view of the foregoing, an early and favorable Office Action is believed to be in order and the same is hereby respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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